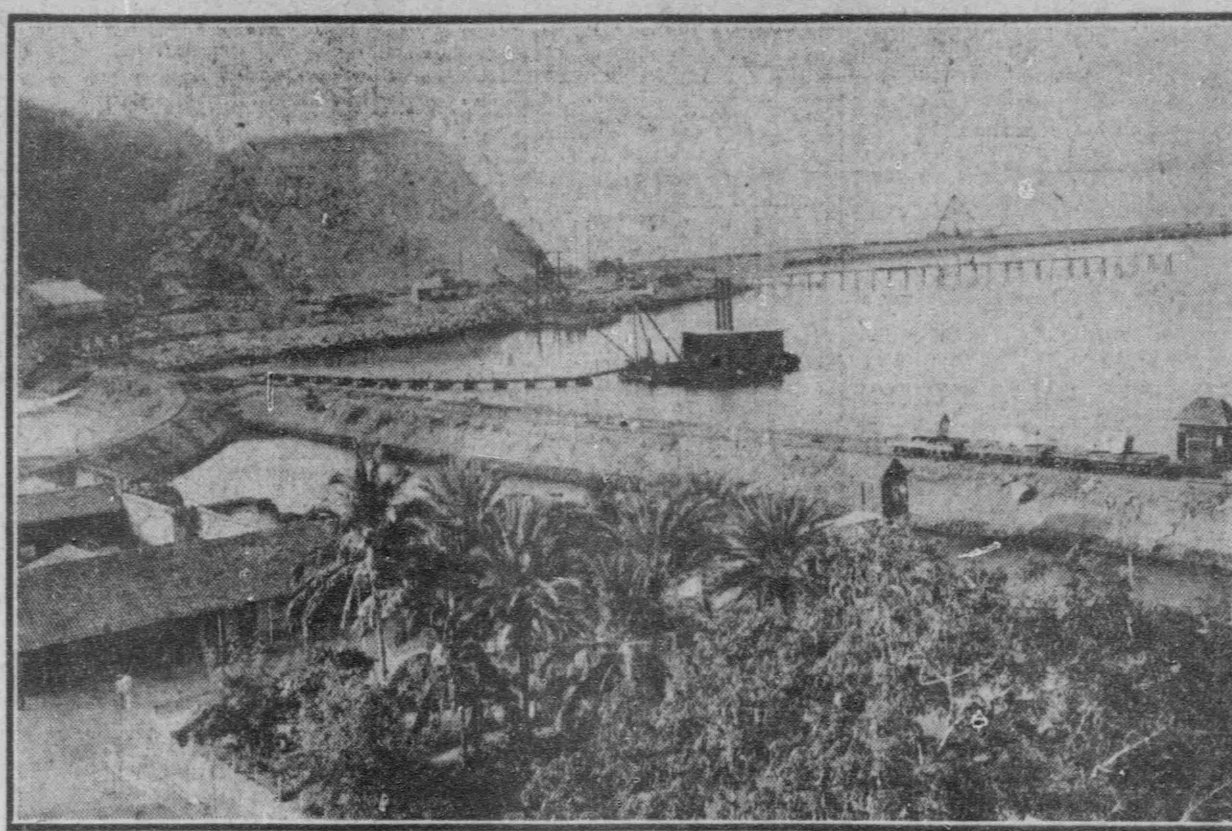


REAL ESTATE AND BUILDING SECTION

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 1908.

HARBOR OF MANZANILLO, MEXICO.



Recent Port Improvement Made by the Government.

MEXICO THE SCENE
OF GREAT ACTIVITYNew Industrial Nation Stands
on Spanish Ruins.

ONE RAILROAD IN 1857

Nearest Neighbor Enters on a
Period of Expansion.

This awakened the country and served as beginning of commercial development—compelling of United States in Cotton Raising. Harbors Have Been Reconstructed. Cities Lighted by Electricity.

Mexico's place among the industrial nations of the modern world is one which does great credit to her statesmen and men of affairs. The natural resources of the country are in many respects the greatest in the world, and for the past thirty years Mexico has been forging ahead industrially and commercially at a pace only excelled by the virile and progressive neighbor to the north.

The Washington Herald is enabled, through the Bureau of American Republics, to present a sketch of this development which shows how Mexico has made progress by great strides until it occupies a place in the forefront of the rapidly developing nations of the Western World. The following article on Mexico was prepared under the supervision of John Barrett, director of the bureau:

Third Among Republics.

Mexico, after all, is only the third largest Latin-American republic, both Brazil and Argentina surpassing her in size. Mexico is not quite one-fourth our size, but Americans are apt to think of her as huge, because she lies so close to us, and because we have invested in her so much good American money. We have contributed \$800,000,000 to bring Mexico into the deserved prosperity of to-day, yet even this is small in comparison to the \$2,000,000,000 of British gold in the Argentine.

But Mexico is big also in that sense of the word which is to mark America of the twentieth century. She has reared the adult stage of civilization and industrial life, and many of the problems confronting every industrial, producing country have been met even more successfully there than with us.

In 1857 the first railroad was chartered, and then Mexico awoke. The French fiasco was only a crisis in the change, and since that date, every step has been one of progress to modernization. In 1890, the republic was practically bankrupt, bonds went begging, and the silver dollar weighted the nation apparently out of reach of the gold standard. Now this has all been changed, the gold is the national unit, she can, at any moment, as she did in 1904, float a loan at 4 per cent with the brokers of the Old World glad of the chance to take it, and she has mounted to that fortunate condition where an immense crop of anything is produced and sold in the market before it is picked.

This Proved in 1906.

This was the case of the cotton crop in 1906. It amounted to 160,000 bales. It was all consumed within the country; merchants had empty warehouses, and some of it went abroad in export, so good was the quality. Importations had not ceased, because the habit of more than a generation could not be shaken, but the importation from the United States declined, and from now on it is seriously threatened by the illimitable possibilities of this neighbor of ours. Acre for acre, it is probable that Mexico can grow as much cotton as we can. The Laguna district, which twenty years ago was a vast swamp, but a railroad crossing, has become a populous center of industry. Here are cotton factories supplying cloth which finds ready purchasers within a small radius. But there are other cotton areas and other factories besides those around Torreon. All told, Mexico has 125 cotton factories, and every year the product of the looms is becoming better and better. Prizes for Mexican cloth have been given in Paris, Buffalo, and St. Louis.

Factories Run by Electricity.

Most of these factories, as well as scores of other producing roads of other products, are run by electricity. One factory draws the current from water power 101 miles away. But in the industrial scene Mexico is new, and has jumped from hand or domestic labor to the most modern and economic installation of machinery. There is one federal district, twenty-seven states, and three territories.

From the City of Mexico, the capital of the republic, to tiny Tepic, the far-away capital of this Western territory, the means of illumination is electricity. Every city has electric light, nearly every city has electric traction, and it will not be long before telephones will be as general to the poor as is now his beloved cotton trousers.

All these improvements and advances, however, are connected with private ownership, or are, at least, due to private initiative subject to the regulations under which concessions are obtained. The government has its national telegraph and is itself using the telephone for its own service, but where government initiative seems necessary, Mexico—that is, the brainy men at the head of the republic—are all that statesmen could be, in patriotism and clearheadedness.

Government Aids the Harbors.

Take the harbor improvements, for example. Quietly but persistently the federal government has undertaken such work as did not fall exactly into the category of commercial opportunity. The harbor at Vera Cruz has been made more fit for modern vessels, at a cost of \$10,000,000. Tampico, farther north, scarcely a village a generation ago, has become one of the best and most important seaports on the Atlantic side, by government energy, so that large steamers can call over the world are making Tampico a port of regular call.

On the Pacific side, Topolobampo, Manzanillo, and San Blas are receiving attention, but perhaps the most noticeable step in this direction taken by Mexico has been the improvements in the harbors of Salina Cruz on the Pacific, and Coahuaco (Puerto Mexico) on the Gulf (Atlantic), at a cost of \$20,000,000, and the establishment of rail connection between them, which is now called the Tehuantepec Railway.

This splendid work was completed and opened to public use on January 23, 1907. These ports and this railroad are as modern as science and engineering skill can make them. Through traffic has begun,

freight being carried from New York to the Orient across this isthmus with a gain of 1,250 miles to San Francisco over the Panama route. It is now possible, to go from New York by rail, partly over the Tehuantepec line, to the borders of Guatemala, and thus Mexico has been early in supplying her link in the still dreamed-of Pan-American Railway.

Government Owns Railways.

The policy of the national government toward the railroads of the country shows another instance of the modernization of that republic, as contrasted with the romance and isolation with which we are apt to consider her. Mexico, not content with exercising a federal control over the practical operation of the transportation lines within her borders, has decided, after mature deliberation, to own a controlling financial interest in the great systems of the republic.

No denial is made of the fact that but for the railroads Mexico might yet be in the non-industrial stage where Spain and Maximilian left her. Since 1857 her mileage has increased to nearly 15,000 miles of track, but her financiers and statesmen desire a unification unattainable under private management. Therefore, within the last five years, and also as a well-devised investment, she has purchased stock in the great transportation systems of the republic; and, while to a large extent leaving the problems of traffic to experienced heads who know the advantages of practical railroading, they prefer to control the policy of the future, so that the nation shall decide what is for the best interests of the people as a national body.

There are some of the surprising accomplishments of Mexico of to-day, of modern, industrial Mexico.

SEVERAL LOTS SOLD.

Thomas J. Fisher & Co. Dispose of Valuable Building Sites.

Thomas J. Fisher & Co. report the following sales during the week:

To Rev. Thomas Edward Shields, the defendant in the case of Twelfth and Philadelphia streets, University Heights, just north of Brookland. The lot is 50x150, improved by a modern nine-room dwelling with large colonial porch. The purchaser will take possession about the middle of the summer.

Lot containing 15,000 square feet, in section 3, Chevy Chase, to Mrs. A. O. Page. The lot is 75x200. Mrs. Page is having plans prepared and will start the erection of her house about June 1.

Property at 1829 G street, and adjoining lot to the east. The entire property is 44 feet 6 inches front, by 121 feet to a 10-foot alley. The house is a four-story and basement brick, containing fourteen rooms and two baths, and is heated by furnace.

To Henry L. Curtis, a plot of ground in Chevy Chase, Md., of 15,000 square feet. It is the intention of Mr. Curtis to begin the construction at once of a fine house on the property, to cost \$100,000. The lot faces east, and has a frontage of seventy-five feet.

MAY USE OIL ON WAR SHIPS

Agitation for Petroleum Fuel Likely to Arise in California.

Practical Advantages of It Set Forth by Expert in Baldwin Locomotive Works.

The arrival of the battle-ship fleet at Magdalena Bay and the coming trip of the sea fighters to San Francisco, in close proximity to the California oil fields, lends interest to the question whether the American navy is about to emulate the example of the British and Japanese in substituting petroleum as the fuel for coal.

The Navy Department for some time past has been considering the advisability of such a course, and the people of California, with the advent of the fleet, will renew the agitation. Already the torpedo-boat flotilla has been equipped so that these crafts are able to burn oil. In fact, a number of them used this fuel on the way around the Horn.

While this country is behind in the matter of using oil on its war ships, the various industries that require great power and generating force have taken kindly to the proposition that the coal question and its various side issues can be solved easily by burning the petroleum that nature furnishes so generously. In this city many of the leading manufacturing plants have substituted oil wherever this is possible. From the opinions gathered the fuel lends itself excellently to many purposes within these establishments.

Both as regards furnishing fuel under boilers, taking the place of steam, or aiding in the finishing processes where steel is manufactured into various articles, oil is manifestly the race with coal as a strong competitor of the future.

At the Baldwin Locomotive Works and the plants of this concern at Eddystone and Burnham, oil is now used extensively as a generating force. In fact, members of the Baldwin works express themselves as highly gratified with the results achieved up to the present. In many instances the substitution has resulted in greater economy, cleaner surroundings, and a facilitating of work not obtainable when coal was the fuel.

"One great benefit in using oil instead of coal," said S. M. Vaulchain, of Baldwin's, "is that it permits us to adhere very closely to the smoke regulations of the city. This should be considered important by itself. But, besides, oil is much cheaper than coal. Naturally it is much cleaner to use, and then there are a number of other advantages in the line of economy."

"We have made many locomotives for Western and Southern roads fitted up for the use of oil," continued Mr. Vaulchain, "and apparently in the districts where oil is plenty it must be a great advantage to use this liquid fuel. I have noticed that there has been some agitation to introduce oil on the battle ships of our navy, but the question seems still unsettled."

WILL BUILD APARTMENT.

Lacurne Lewis Has Plans for Three-story Structure on P Street.

Wood, Dunn & Deming recently completed plans for Lacurne Lewis, who is preparing to erect a three-story apartment house of modern design on the north side of T street, between Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets northwest.

The building will have a frontage of 62 feet and a depth of 144. It will be constructed of dark brown brick laid in white mortar, with stone trimmings and a red tile roof. The building will be ornamented with an iron marquee in front and balconies of the same material at the windows. The entrance has a wide vestibule finished in Caen stone.

The building will contain fifteen suites of apartments, each with a private entrance is accessible to a combination service stair and fire escape. The building will be lighted by electricity throughout.

LOTS SELL IN WOODRIDGE.

Suburban Development Active in Extreme Northeastern Section.

It is reported from A. L. Teel's real estate office, at the intersection of Rhode Island avenue and Twentieth street northeast, that the inquiry for property in that section is larger than usual, and the outlook very favorable. Four sales have been reported from the office, two of lots in Woodridge, and two of homes, one in Sherwood and one in Brookland, each bringing \$2,750.

Ground is being broken in every subdivision for one or more new houses, which are, like the ones built before, very attractive and homelike. The District fire engine house and school are nearing completion. Gas and water are accessible. Sewers are promised during the fiscal year. Money is in hand to macadamize Rhode Island avenue as far as Twentieth street.

The corner-stone of the new hall for Langdon Lodge, No. 25, I. O. O. F., was laid last Wednesday afternoon at 5 o'clock, under the auspices of the Grand Lodge. The new home of the lodge is at Twentieth street and Rhode Island avenue, and will have two stores on the main floor.

SALES BY SHANNON & LUCHS.

Eleventh Street Residence Brings \$4,650, an Advance in Price.

Shannon & Luchs report the following sales for the week:

The residence at 3512 Eleventh street northwest, for Samuel Rose. This property is of colonial design and is one of a row of six that the firm finished selling about three or four months ago. They are reselling this property at an advance, and it is understood that the price was about \$4,650. The purchaser, Mrs. Margaret Schatz, will occupy the property as her home.

The residence at the corner of Fourteenth and Shepherd streets northwest, which is one of a new row of houses under construction, and which are expected to be finished within the next month or two. The house has nine rooms and is two stories high. The consideration in the transaction was \$5,750, and the purchaser, who is connected with the government, will occupy the property as his home when it is completed.

Premises 324 Tenth street northwest, for Lewis E. Breuninger, the builder, who has just completed the construction of this house. It was sold to Franklin Beener, who will occupy same for his home, and the consideration in the transaction was about \$4,750.

BUILT OF CONCRETE BLOCK.

These houses are on the north side of P street, between Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets, and are a type of construction of which there are few in this city or other cities. The material is concrete block made with a specially designed machine, which turns out blocks of any desired size or shape. The blocks are then laid in mortar, such as brick are laid. The blocks being hollow, the resulting walls are warm in winter and dry in the summer of the year. The use of this material is yet in the experimental stage, but it is expected that it will in the future take the place of brick to some extent.

CONSTRUCTED BY PALMER & BREUNER.

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